

# Fierce gunfight by rival activists in Rangamati

## UPDF allegedly abducts six PCJSS men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Six activists of Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) were abducted allegedly by United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) from Horirampur village in Naniachar upazila yesterday.

A fierce gunfight between PCJSS and UPDF took place during the abduction yesterday morning. The rival activists fled away when security forces reached there.

Those abducted are Krinch Lila

Chakma, 30, Kanika Chakma, 28, Arun Bihari Chakma, 33, Jagra Dewan, 47, Sadhan Purnaya Chakma, 32, and Arun Bikash Chakma, 28, security forces said.

PCJSS supports the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace agreement signed during Awami League government in 1997 but UPDF opposes the accord. Sources in security forces said, at around 6.40 am yesterday, a gang of armed UPDF activists entered Horirampur village.

In bid to resist the abduction, armed activists of PCJSS opened

fire on the kidnappers, ensuing a gunfight, which continued about 90 minutes, the sources said.

Security personnel said they recovered 158 shells of bullets after the gunfight in which 303 rifle, SMG, 9 mm Machine Gun and other firearms were used.

Security forces arrested a villager from the spot.

Army beefed up patrol in the area as tension mounted after the incident.

On Monday, at least four activists of Paharai Chhatra Parishad (PCP),

student front of PCJSS, were abducted allegedly by UPDF from different areas of Khagrachhari town, PCJSS said. The abducted persons were students.

The abduction took place following a clash between UPDF and PCP at Khagrachhari Government College on Sunday centring a freshers' reception. UPDF leaders in Khagrachhari however said their activists were not involved in the abduction.

## PCJSS man held with pistol

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

An army team yesterday arrested a member of the Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) with a country made pistol at a remote village of Shuknachhai in Panchhari upazila.

Acting on a tip-off, army personnel raided the village at about 5 am and arrested Anupom Bikash Chakma, 35, with the pistol, sources said.

On interrogation, Anupom admitted his association with the PCJSS as an active member.

However, PCJSS information secretary refuted the allegations

## Two drown as boats collide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Two persons drowned when two boats collided on Kurulia river in Sadar upazila Monday night.

The dead are Rahima Begum, 17, and Mafza Akter, 8 of Krishnanagar village in Nabinagar upazila.

# 62 diagnostic centres out of 71 in CHT illegal

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

At least 62 pathological laboratories and diagnostic centres in Chittagong Hill Tracts are unauthorised and making a mink at the cost of patients.

Due to wrong diagnosis by them, patients are getting wrong treatment, at times leading to death but the authorities are unconcerned.

According to sources at the civil surgeon's offices in Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban, 62 out of 71 pathological laboratories operating in Chittagong Hill Tracts have no licence. They are ill-equipped and operating illegally, also depriving the government of revenue.

Twenty-two out of 24 centres are illegal in Khagrachhari, 22 out of 27 in Rangamati and 18 out of 20 in Bandarban district, the sources said.

The centres operating with licence are Lake Site Hospital,

Janata Laboratory, Dr. Lab (Severon), Nironjan Usha Memorial Hospital and Sudha Diagnostic Centre in Rangamati; Chandni Diagnostic Centre and Ekota Laboratory in Khagrachhari and Mukta Diagnosti Centre and Mount Valley Hospital in Bandarban.

Owners of the illegal pathological centres are doing business allegedly in connivance with a section of dishonest health officials and doctors working at government hospitals, the sources said.

Patients are often lured away from government hospitals with a promise for better treatment, allegedly with the help of the dishonest health officials and their agents.

Most of the people working as 'technicians' at illegal pathological centres have no training and requisite qualification. In most of the illegal diagnostic centres, health assistants perform tests and diagnose diseases, which often prove to be incorrect, the sources said.

As per law, a pathologist must

have a diploma from a recognised institution and undergo three years' training before working as a technician in a pathological laboratory, they said.

When contacted over phone, Rangamati Civil Surgeon Dr. Md. Nazer and Khagrachhari Deputy Civil Surgeon Dr. Belayet Hossen said they are looking into the matter. A three-member team headed by a medical officer at the CS office has been formed to identify the illegal pathological centres, Md Nazer said.

The Khagrachhari civil surgeon said notices have been served on owners of illegal diagnostic centres to apply for licence.

Bandarban Civil Surgeon Dr. Mahafuzur Talukder said, "We can't do anything as most of the labs are run by government doctors and local influential people are involved in the business. The Directorate of Health or the ministry should take steps against them, he said.

## Bus strike in 6 northern dists postponed till Aug 30

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

An indefinite bus strike in six northern districts was postponed till August 30 following fruitful talks yesterday. Transport owners and leaders met the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Dinajpur and discussed the issues.

The strike was scheduled to begin on 52 routes in Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Nilphamari, Rangpur and Gaibandha yesterday.

Newly-appointed DC Md Tahsinur Rahman gave an assurance to the striking transport leaders to resolve the dispute between local bus operators and Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) within August 30 and urged the bus operators to ply their vehicles.

In return, the transport owners and workers associations of six districts agreed to postpone strike and operate their buses till August 30. The details of the agreement could not be known immediately.

Most of the passengers in Dinajpur prefer journey by BRTC buses to private buses. They claim that private bus operators often realise additional fare from them.

This correspondent tried to contact the BRTC bus operators for their comments but none responded.

## Traders protest extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Traders in Dariyapur Bazar in Gaibandha Sader upazila brought out a black flag procession yesterday protesting toll collection by musclemen and police failure to arrest them.

Police did not arrest any of the toll collectors despite repeated appeals, the demonstrators said at a rally held at Jamtali ground after the procession.

On August 18, traders in the market observed a half-day hartal and barricaded the Gaibandha-Sunderganj road.

# PDB office besieged in Sylhet for power

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Sylhet Bibhag Ganodabi Parishad, a citizens' forum, yesterday took out a procession in the city and laid a siege to the Power Development Board (PDB) office demanding smooth power supply.

The demonstrators chanted slogans during the procession, protesting frequent power outage.

They held a rally on the PDB office premises at Bagbari and handed over a memorandum to its officials.

With Md Turan Mian presiding, speakers at the rally said power stations in Sylhet region produce 180 MW electricity a day, which can fully meet the demand of four districts in greater Sylhet. But the region reels under severe power crisis as power is supplied to other districts.

They demanded that Sylhet region's requirement has to be met before taking power for other districts. Otherwise, tougher agitation will be launched soon, they said.

Another rally was held in Dargah Mohalla area in Ward No. 1

in the city on Monday to press the same demand. Speakers there threat-



A procession organised by Sylhet Bibhag Ganodabi Parishad before laying a siege to PDB office in Sylhet city yesterday for smooth power supply.

ened of tougher agitation if the crisis is not resolved within a week.

At both the rallies, speakers blamed a section of PDB officials for the power crisis in Sylhet region.

In Beanibazar, Awami League's

student front Bangladesh Chhatra League called a half-day hartal in the upazila for Thursday to protest load shedding.

## JUBO DAL LEADER MURDER IN BISWANATH

# BNP lawmaker accused of sheltering culprits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Family members of a Juba Dal leader killed earlier allegedly by party men yesterday accused the local ruling party lawmaker of giving protection to the killers.

Nur-e-Alam, former joint convener of Biswanath upazila unit of Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal, was injured when attacked allegedly by a group of rival party activists on July 21. He died on August 8 at a private clinic in Dhaka.

The victim's family at a press

conference at Sylhet Press Club alleged that the killers are not arrested as they are sheltered by the BNP lawmaker.

Alam's father Md. Dilkush Ali, brother Sayed Alam, sister Shompa Akhtar spoke at the press conference where fellow villagers were also present.

Alam was attacked at Biswanath Puran Bazaar when he was returning home on the night of July 21.

After the incident his father filed a case with Biswanath police on

August 13 accusing six local Juba Dal activists. They are Monayem Khan, Khalil, Harun, Azad, Noor and Liton.

He alleged that rivals killed him as he wanted to contest the upazila Juba Dal election.

The lawmaker is now trying to implicate a local Awami League leader in the murder, he claimed.

The AL leader is a prospective rival of the BNP MP in the coming election, the victim's family said.



Workers and employees of Quami Jute Mill brought out a procession (left) during hartal in Sirajganj town yesterday to press their 8-point demand.



PHOTO: STAR

## Jute mill workers enforce strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Quami Jute Mill workers and employees yesterday enforced a half-day hartal in Sirajganj town to press their 8-point demand including procurement of jute to keep the mill running and payment of arrear salaries.

During hartal hours, no vehicles plied while offices, educational institutes and banks remained closed. A huge contingent of police was deployed in the town during hartal period.

Several hundreds workers and employees under the banner of Quami Jute Mill Majdur Union

brought out a procession in the morning. Processionists paraded the main streets of the town in support of their demands and protested the government move to close down the mill.

A meeting was held at the Bazar Railway Station intersection with Abdul Khaleq, president of the union in the chair.

Speakers announced a rail-road barricade programme on August 29, if their demands are not met within the stipulated time.

Among others, Sujabat Ali, Nabakumar Karmakar, Shahidul Islam and Mahub-e-Khoda Tutul addressed.

## Three murdered in Kushtia, Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Three persons were killed by the outlawed party cadres and criminals here and in Jhenidah in last two days.

Ilyas Hossain was killed in Kushtia while Thandu and Bipul were murdered in Jhenidah.

Criminals picked up Ilyas from Chitholia bazar at about 9.30:pm Monday night.

Local people found the body at a field at Chitholia yesterday. Later, police recovered the body and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital.

Police suspect that the cadres of Mondol group in the locality might have killed him in a dispute over land.

Ilyas, son of Tofazzal Hossain hails from Zulapara village in Mirpur upazila.

In Jhenidah, Bipul of Sharbaria in Kaliganj upazila was beaten to death allegedly by outlaws.

Police said Bipul had dispute with some outlawed party cadres over local issues. Outlaws had threatened him of dire consequences.

Criminals came to Ramchandrapur bazar in Kaliganj and beat Bipul at a shop at about 8.30:pm on Sunday. Critically injured, he was shifted to Jessore General Hospital where he died Monday morning.

In another incident, Saikupa police recovered a slaughtered body at a garden at Bakshipur village on Monday morning. The victim was identified as rickshaw-puller Thandu who was missing since Friday.

Family members said a gang called Thandu out of his house on the day. He had rivalry with some people in the area over a number of issues, police said. They might have killed him, police added.

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